

REMARKS

Claims 1-52 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the Election of Species Requirement in view of the remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

Election of Species

The Examiner has set forth an Election of Species Requirement with regard to claims 1-52. The grouping of the claims are set forth as follows:

LOCK-IN MECHANISM

Species I: Fig. 3

Species II: Fig. 4

TAPE GUIDES AND TAPE MAGAZINES

Species III: Figs. 6a-6b

Species IV: Fig. 7

Species V: Fig. 8

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's Election of Species Requirement, Applicant has elected Species I, Fig. 3, claims 1-52 for initial examination. It is respectfully submitted that a reasonable number of species are permitted in a single application. The present application contains only two species of the "lock-in mechanism" and three species

of the “tape guides and tape magazines.” It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner’s Election of Species Requirement is improper in view of the fact that a reasonable number of species are set forth in the present application.

Because of the very close interrelationship between all of the species of the present application and because of the potential expenses which might be required to file separate applications to cover the related species, it is believed that all of the species are properly examinable in a single application. However, in order to be responsive to the Examiner’s Election of Species Requirement, claims 1-52 have been initially elected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the Election of Species Requirement, so that Applicants are not prevented from directing claims to the other species of the present application at a later date if it is so desired. However, if the Examiner does persist in the Election of Species Requirement, Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to the non-elected species.

Applicants also request clarification of the Examiner’s Election of Species Requirement. Specifically, the Examiner has requested Applicant to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits. However, Applicant submits that there are actually two distinct sets of species in the present application that should have been asserted by the Examiner. Specifically, Applicant believes that the Examiner should have requested Applicant to elect one of the Species I or the Species II, which are directed to the “lock-in mechanism” and also elect one of the Species III, Species IV or Species V, which are directed to the “tape guides and tape magazines.” Referring to Figs. 6a, 6b, 7 and 8 of the present application, each of Fig. 6, 7 and 8 illustrate different species of the tape magazines 40. In each of these embodiments, either the tape guide 10 of Fig. 3 or the tape

guide 10 of Fig. 4 can be used. In view of this, Applicants believe that two separate and distinct species requirements should have been required by the Examiner. Specifically, the Examiner should have required Applicant to elect either the tape guide in Fig. 3 or tape guide in Fig. 4 and also to elect the tape magazine in Fig. 6, the tape magazine in Fig. 7 or the tape magazine in Fig. 8. To the extent that the Examiner is in agreement with the Applicant, Applicant hereby elects the species of Fig. 7 along with the tape guide of Fig. 3. Although this does not change the fact that claims 1-52 are readable on the species of Fig. 3, this may have some effect on future claims that are presented to the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant has provided this election as well.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that all of claims 1-52 should be examined by the Examiner at this time. Every claim in the application reads on Figs. 3 and 7 of the present application, although these claims may also be readable on other figures as well, i.e., may be generic to the present invention. Further to this, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims in the present application are generic to the present invention except for claims 8, 21, 34 and 47. However, since these claims read on Fig. 3, Applicant submits that all of the claims in the present application should be considered by the Examiner.

Favorable action on the present application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Paul C. Lewis (Reg. No. 43,368) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

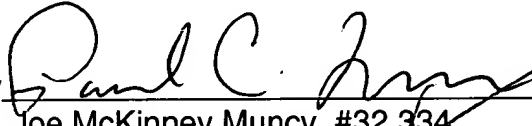
If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for

any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly,
extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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0104-0349P

(Rev. 01/02/02)